The **passé simple** is a past tense reserved primarily for written discourse. It may, however, be used in very formal spoken language, such as presidential addresses, sermons, or news broadcasting. It has traditionally been used only for events completed in the distant, historical past; however, twentieth century writers sometimes use it for stylistic effect.   
  
The passé simple will generally be translated into English by a preterit, that is, the simple past: 'I talk**ed**'. But like the passé composé, the passé simple is used in French only to mention changes and events, while the imparfait remains the tense used for describing the setting, the atmosphere, an ongoing state of mind, or the general situation.   
**irregular verbs: avoir, être, faire**   
These verbs are irregular in the **passé simple**. 

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|  | |  |  | | --- | --- | | **avoir**  **'to have'** | | | j'**eus** | nous **eûmes** | | tu **eus** | vous **eûtes** | | il / elle / on **eut** | ils / elles **eurent** | |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | |  |  | | --- | --- | | **être**  **'to be'** | | | je **fus** | nous **fûmes** | | tu **fus** | vous **fûtes** | | il / elle / on **fut** | ils / elles **furent** | |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | |  |  | | --- | --- | | **faire**  **'to do'** | | | je **fis** | nous **fîmes** | | tu **fis** | vous **fîtes** | | il / elle / on **fit** | ils / elles **firent** | |